

## *District Governor's Annual Report 2019 – 2020*

Twelve months ago, when I was inducted as District Governor, I outlined my vision for the year and detailed my goals and how Clubs could achieve them:

1. each Club commence a new community project, and
2. each Club source new grant funding for a local project.



As Bronwyn and I commenced our visits, responses from Clubs indicated that these goals were achievable and discussions with Boards were very positive, with Rotarians exploring ways to strengthen their local communities.

During our visits Clubs shared with us some of their amazing projects including large Reserve makeovers, shelters, accessible playground equipment, off-leash dog parks, art exhibitions, book sheds and sales, gardens at Schools and Retirement Villages, gym equipment on exercise trails, historical gardens, tree plantings, murals depicting the town's history, youth centres, markets, Primary School Public Speaking, battery drives and baby bundles to name a few. These projects were in addition to the drought and bushfire projects that all of the Clubs in D9650 were involved in.

In addition, many Clubs were supporting other local groups including Meals on Meals, BackTrack, Youth Insearch and the many Show Societies throughout the District.

Armidale North Rotarian Brian Bremner has compiled a list of projects undertaken by Clubs over the years. I will be working with the Assistant Governors to expand and distribute the list.

The cancellation of District Conference and Showcase were major disappointments to us all, as these events would have provided the opportunity for Clubs to share and celebrate the wonderful work Rotarians are doing in their local community.

One of these projects was the Welch Allyn monitor project which was driven by the Coffs Harbour Daybreak Club and I would like to take the opportunity to share some of the presentation Liz Donnan would have made at Conference.

This ambitious project was suggested to the Mid North Coast Cancer Institute (MNCCI) at Coffs Harbour in 2016. The project involved the purchase and installation of an integrated health platform that would eliminate human error transcribing patient vital signs data, enable nurses to spend more time with their patients and improve clinical responses to the individual needs of patients. The project was launched in 2017 seeking community support to fund ten Welch Allyn monitors, each costing over \$8,800.



After extensive testing and patient trials throughout 2017 and 2018, MNCCI staff were able to announce to Rotary representatives in November 2018 that there was enough data to confirm the project was an outstanding success. After three years, the project is now embedded into the workflow of the oncology unit providing 6,000 treatments for oncology and around 11,000 specialist consultations a year. "Real time" information has increased patient safety and saves valuable time previously taken up in transcription duties by nurses who are now spending more time with their patients. The project has been implemented at the Port Macquarie Cancer Institute and other hospitals have also expressed interest in adopting the technology.

The innovative partnerships between the Coffs Harbour Rotary Clubs and the Mid North Coast Cancer Institute earned two major awards at the Mid North Coast Local Health District's 2019 Health Innovation Awards. The MNCCI's Coffs Harbour Campus is the first cancer centre in the world to use technology to interface and integrate its vital signs monitors with an oncology-specific electronic medical records system. This World First innovative project was a finalist in the 2019 NSW Health Awards.

The Manager of Nursing and Service Development at MNCCI, Jill Harrington, said:

*"If the Rotary Club of Coffs Harbour Daybreak had not taken a lead in partnering with us in the project, and bringing other Clubs and individuals on board, we may not have been able to deliver this world-first project at all."*

### **Youth Programs**

The District has a history of successful involvement in many Youth Programs, although most have been impacted this year by either bushfires or the COVID-19 pandemic. The National Youth Science Forum, Public Speaking and the Long Term Youth Exchange programs were curtailed and the Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA) was cancelled.

In relation to the Youth Exchange Program (YEP) both inbounders and outbounders have been affected, although many students will complete their exchanges with a reduction in activities due to the lockdowns around the world. The success of the program this year has been due to the constant hard work by the Committee, Counsellors and host families in very difficult circumstances.



NYSF Students were impacted in different ways. Session A in Canberra was cancelled halfway through the program due to bushfires and these students have been offered alternate programs and activities. Session C was cancelled, fees refunded and students have been offered a place at the 2021 event. Session B went ahead in Brisbane as scheduled. Thanks to the NYSF organisation, the Rotary Chairs and DG group for ensuring a satisfactory outcome.

The RYAG Sheep event held in Walcha in early March was an outstanding success with over 30 students attending. Activities included hands on workshops covering the selection and judging of rams, embryo transfer, low stress stock handling, whole farm management, drone demonstrations, genetics, carcass scanning, shearing, wool classing, fibre testing, dog training and much, much more. Congratulations to the Walcha Club for a successful event.



### **Drought and Bushfire Support**



Every Club in District 9650 has been involved in either Drought or Bushfire projects with over 60% being involved in both. In the last 12 months, millions of dollars have been distributed throughout the District either in cash, materials or in support for affected communities with the funds coming from a variety of sources including District, RAWCS, private donors and local communities.

The work undertaken by Clubs in the Manning, Macleay Valley and Armidale areas has been outstanding. The RAWCS projects in these areas have benefitted hundreds of people who have been impacted by either drought or bushfire or both, in the case of the Armidale area. Of special mention is the significant work of David Pearson from the Guyra Club who, through his role at RAWCS, was responsible for delivering hay valued at over \$1,000,000 to drought affected areas throughout District 9650.

### ***Grant Opportunities***

During the year more Clubs took advantage of the many grant opportunities available including additional funds from District and RAWCS. Many Clubs also applied for grants through State and Federal Governments and Local Councils. As discussed during Club visits there are a large number of groups offering grants and Clubs are encouraged to seek the assistance of organisations such as Regional Development Australia, Council Grant Officers or professional grant companies.

### ***International Projects***

As well as strengthening local communities Clubs in District 9650 have projects in many overseas countries including Kenya, Vanuatu, Indonesia, Papua and New Guinea, Nepal, Zimbabwe, India, Fiji, Uganda and South Africa.

### ***RYLA***

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of RYLA was another project impacted by the pandemic, however the program will run in August at Lake Keepit. Our RYLA program has been the catalyst for change in numerous young people's lives and is held in high regard throughout Australia. Its ongoing success is a result of years of research and hard work by a dedicated team.

### ***E News***

Thanks must go to PDG Neville Parsons for consistently producing a high quality publication with relevant, interesting information. I must also thank those Clubs and Committees who submitted articles for publication as this ensured that each issue was different and informative.

### ***Partner's Project***

*Bronwyn writes:* It was a privilege and joy for me to meet with our club members throughout our District 9650. Without exception, the response to and support of "my" Lifeline Project has been incredible. So many of you shared your personal experiences of Lifeline crisis support, and it was obvious that the need to extend crisis support to all members of our community was, is and will be a significant priority.



The increased loss, stress and anxiety we have and are experiencing is devastating, and the necessity of providing ongoing crisis support throughout our District is vital.

Despite the restrictions placed on Clubs as a result of Covid 19, and the necessity to cancel so many of the fund raising activities planned, our Clubs have, thus far, generously raised over \$36,000 for our Project. Thank you!

Our support must, and will reflect the specific needs of our communities and in this regard I am greatly encouraged by the recent news from Coffs Harbour Daybreak and Coffs Harbour Rotary Clubs. These Clubs have partnered with Coffs Harbour Lifeline to fund a four-day education program for new Lifeline members. In addition to supporting our District Project, they donated \$3,000 for this venture.

Covid 19 has unfortunately curtailed our planning and implementation across the District, however as DG Debbie is continuing to support our Project during her year, I look forward to the prospect of implementing our Project as originally planned.

***In conclusion,*** I wish to thank the Management Committee who have supported me through this very difficult year and also thank the Clubs and Members who have worked tirelessly to support and strengthen those in need in their local communities.